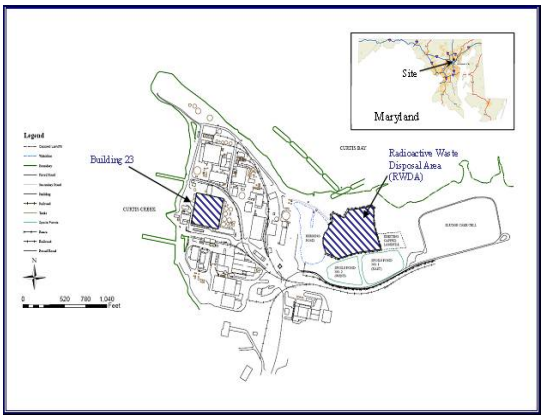
W.R. Grace – Davison at Curtis Bay

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS **BUILDING STRONG®**

FACT SHEET as of 1 January 2012

Authorization: FY2012 USACE Civil Works Budget submission included in Energy and Water Legislation



Type of Project: Environmental Restoration of the WR Grace, Curtis Bay Works Formerly Utilized Site Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) site

Project Phase: Building 23 – Remedial Action (RA); Radioactive Waste Disposal Area – Remedial Action (RA) pending

Congressional Interest: Senators Cardin and Mikulski, Congressman Ruppersberger

Non-Federal Sponsor: N/A

Background:

The W.R. Grace / Grace Davison Chemical Division, Curtis Bay Facility is located on an industrialized peninsula in South Baltimore, and consists of 260 acres owned by W.R. Grace. The property is bordered on the north by Curtis Bay, on the west by Curtis Creek, on the east by the Patapsco River, and on the south by the Baltimore City Municipal Landfill.

Chemical processing has been performed at the Grace site since 1909. In the early 1940's, Grace produced agricultural fertilizers and industrial chemicals. During World War II, the facility manufactured explosives and participated in Manhattan Engineer District (MED) activities. In 1955, Rare Earths, Inc., the predecessor of Grace, entered into a contract with the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to extract radioactive thorium and other rare earth elements from monazite sand that was shipped to the Curtis Bay plant; the thorium processing was terminated at the Grace Site in 1956. From 1912 until 1979, all waste material generated at the plant was disposed of in areas to the east of the plant proper.

In October 1997, Congress transferred authority for the FUSRAP from the Department of Energy (DOE) to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Under the program, sites where the MED and the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) contract work occurred are evaluated to determine the nature and extent of resulting contamination. The Grace site is one of 22 sites remaining nationwide that DOE had determined requires either remedial action or further investigation. As related to the FUSRAP, the historical documents on the Grace site indicate that the following areas within the site either were, or may have been, impacted: vertical and horizontal surfaces within Building 23 that came in contact with thorium during processing; the area directly surrounding Building 23; and a 7-acre landfill known as the Radioactive Waste Disposal Area (RWDA).

On April 21, 2008, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court of Delaware approved a Site-Wide Settlement Agreement (Docket No. 18571) between W.R. GRACE Company et al. and the U.S. Government (represented by the Department of Justice (DOJ)). This Agreement apportioned the liability costs for remediation of FUSRAP materials across the entire site. The apportionment of liability is a follows: GRACE 40 percent; government 60 percent. As part of the Agreement, GRACE will directly conduct the USACE-selected Remedial Action for both Building 23 and RWDA with oversight provided by USACE. GRACE will apply periodically to the DOJ for reimbursement of the government's share from the DOJ Judgment Fund for all qualified costs as described in the Agreement. USACE is responsible for review and approval of costs submitted for reimbursement, approval of technical documents, and manifesting the FUSRAP waste offsite to the appropriate waste facility, on behalf of the Government.

Status:

GRACE started Remedial Action activities on Building 23 in early spring 2009 with USACE providing technical oversight and cost reimbursement approvals. The work is still ongoing and is expected to be completed by the end of 2012. The RWDA Record of Decision was approved in September 2011. Remedial Action planning has started for the RWDA. The work is scheduled to begin in 2012 with an estimated completion date of 2015.

For more information regarding the W.R GRACE-Davison FUSRAP Project, contact Ms. Brenda Barber, CENAB-EN-HN, at 410-962-0030, or by e-mail at: Brenda.M.Barber@usace.army.mil.